Numb. 58.

THE OBSERVATOR.

...marks on Her Majesties Speech, relating to the Exportation of Wooll. On the Discourse of the Town. A Vindication of King Williams *Memory.*

From Saturday November the 7th, to Wednesday November the 11th, 1702.

...ntry-m. WE Claim your Promise Mr. *Observator*, of obliging the Company ...h your Remarks on that part of Her Maje...s Speech, relating to the Exportation of ...oll. I can call God to Witness, that I never in ... Life time did send so much as one Pound of ...oll to *France*, tho' many of my Neighbours ...ve done it, and thereby have gotten vast ...tates. I did not Care, for my part, if it were ...de Fellony to Export *Wooll* out of this ...ingdom.

Obs. I suppose, Gentlemen, you do not ex...ct from me a Discourse of the Nature of *Wooll*, ...d of its Advantage to the Kingdom; this ...ery one knows, and our Crafty Neighbours ...n take no better way to Impoverish our Na...on, and to Enrich themselves, than by getting ...r *Wooll* at any Rate. What I suppose you ...ould hear from me, is the Disease of its Tran...portation and the Remedy to prevent it. The ...isease can only be attributed to the Remis...ss of the Officers employ'd in that Affair; ...d the Ignorance of their Superiors in the Ma...agement: I would not be thought Rude in ...questioning the Judgment of Chief Officers; ...r when a Management is contrary to com...on Sense and Reason, and the Nature of the ...hing, it is the Object of every Mans Notice, ...specially in a Thing so nearly relating to the ...Vellfare of our dear Country.

I leave it to any Mans Consideration, whe...her the Person, appointed to Prosecute *Owlers*, ...ught at the same time to be Surveyor of the ...Counties of *Kent* and *Sussex*, at the Sallary of ...00 *l. per Ann.* besides Traveling Charges, of ...which he has given into Parliament, an Ac...count of 100 *l.* spent in one Journey. You'll ...y, Why ought not this Man to be a Sur...veyor? I answer, because he gets more by Pro...secuting one Pack of *Wooll*, than by Seizing of ...two; and consequently had rather have 10 Packs ...of *Wooll*, go cleverly to *France*, upon Informa...tion, than to have 50 Seized without it. Who...ever is acquainted with the Bills charg'd the Go...vernment on the Account of Prosecutions, will be of my mind.

A Monopoly of Offices, is as Detrimental to Governments, as are Monopolies of Commodities to Trade, only with this Difference in the Effect, as Monoplies in Trade make particular Persons Rich, So Monopolies in Government make a Nation Poor; one would have thought it had been Honour enough for an Upholdsterer to Solicite the Prosecutions of *Owlers* without having a Supertendency in the Management of preventing the Exportation of *Wooll*.

You may, Perhaps, think what I have already said, is not sufficient to prove my Allegation; that the Prosecutor of *Owlers*, ought not to be the Chief Officer in hind'ring the Exportation of *Wooll*. But when I have told you that such an Officer having the Ear of the Treasury is capable of frustrating all effectual Designs and Methods of preventing this Transportation; you'll, Perhaps, conclude that I am in the Right; but as Arguments drawn from matter of Fact are most Convincive, and leave the greatest Impressions on Humane Minds; I shall Corroborate my Assertion with the Undeniable Argument of Fact, which in Effect is Demonstration.

Some time ago Mr. *Walter Devereux* Petition'd the Parliament to consider a Scheme he had formed to prevent the Exportation of *Wooll*, which Scheme seeming Practicable to the House, and it being near the Close of the Session, it was referr'd to the Consideration of the then Lords of the Treasury; but the Prosecutor of the *Owlers*, having before presented a Scheme to the same effect; which being Executed by their Lordships, was the occasion of the said Prosecutor's being made Surveyors of the Counties of *Kent* and *Sussex*; The said Mr. *Devereux* finding this Scheme likely to be the Obstacle to the Execution of his own, got a Copy thereof, and made some Animadvertions thereon, to Demonstrate the Impracticableness thereof; upon which Account the said Mr. *Devereux*, was Arrested by the Prosecutor, before the Lords of the Treasury had taken his Scheme into Consideration, as it was referred to them from Parliament; and I could never learn that the said Mr. *Devereux*'s Scheme was ever consider'd by the Treasury-Board, tho' according to my Opinion, it was the most Practicable of any I ever saw of that Nature.

This single Instance of it self is sufficient to Demonstrate the Vanity of those Men, who endeavour to serve their Country in preventing the Exportation of *Wooll*. When it is in the Power of the Monopolizers of Places at Court to set aside the most Rational Projections, tho' recommended from Parliament: This formerly would have been matter of a General Complaint, in times when Men valued the good of their Country before their own Private Intereſt. But 'tis well if we (upon whom the Ends of the World are come) can keep but a sample of our Antient Trade to Transmit to Posterity; for what with the Avarice of Traders, and the Corruption of Officers, by Exportations of *Wooll*, and Importations of Goods, which our own People do Manufacture at home; we have reduced the *English* Trade to a meer Skelleton; so that our Fore-Fathers, were they Alive, would be Frighted at its Consumptive appearance.

Country-m. Mr. *Observator*, The other day, when I was at *London*, I met a Man in the Street whom I had known to be an Officer in our County not long ago in preventing the Exportation of *Wooll*; I knew he was a very honest

Man

Man in his Employment, and had done his Country conſiderable Service in Seizing of *Wooll*. I offered him a Pot of Drink, and ſo we went to the Ale-Houſe, where he told me his Story; he Boaſted as much of the Packs of *Wooll* he had Seized, as an *Oliverian* would Boaſt of the Cavaliers he had kill'd in the late Civil War; and truly one got juſt as much by the Bargain as did the other: For he told me he had not receiv'd one Penny for all his Service, and that he belonged to the *Commiſſioners* appointed by Act of Parliament to prevent the Exportation of *Wooll*. I Vow the poor Gentleman (I heartily Pity him) was ſo Shabby and Ragged, I was e'en aſham'd to ſee him.

Obſ, That is the common Fate of ſuch as do their Country the trueſt Service; fine Cloaths, long Wigs and Swords, are the Ornaments of ſuch as Pimp, or Buy Themſelves into Employments. If thoſe Commiſſioners you mention had been Employ'd farther in that Affair we had broke the Neck of the *Owling* Trade e'er this Time; but the Officers under them, could not ſubſiſt without Money, and ſome People took Care they ſhould have none; which put a full ſtop to their Proceedings. However, they took care at the ſame time to Pay the Officer, they themſelves Employ'd in that Affair; from whence it Naturally follows, they made a Treaſury Eſtabliſhment, Preferrable to that of Parliament. And on all occaſions they have taken Care to provide for themſelves and Favourites out of the Publick Funds, without any regard to the good Services of others. An Act paſſed *Anno Primo Gulielmi & Mariæ*, appointing a certain Duty for the Payment of the Debts due to the Servants of King *Charles* the Second. The great Officers at Court Pay'd themſelves out of the Monies ariſing by that Act, and the other Servants of the ſaid King, are Un-pay'd to this very day, and want Bread.

The Care of thoſe Poor Officers you mention is very diſmal, and worthy the Publick Conſideration of the Nation. I have heard them ſet forth their Grievance to a Committee of Parliament, and Difficulties in the Execution of their Office; and ſome of 'em in the *Northern* Stations have been Brain'd, others have been Wounded, but all of 'em Unpaid. I remember at that time a certain Gentleman ſaid, *If their Tentants in the* North, *were not allowed to ſend* Wooll *to* Scotland, *they would not be able to Pay their Rents.* You don't know, Gentlemen, how many Intereſts in *England* are for the Exportation of *Wooll*, and Powerful Ones too; but I hope we ſhall once more rouſe up the Genius of old *England*, which has ſo long lain in a Lethargy. We ſhall never Recover our Trade, till ſuch time as we have Recovered our Senſes, and ſome Publick Officers are a little more accquainted with Honeſty and Good Management of a Publick Truſt. 'Tis in Vain to make Seizures; 'tis in Vain to Diſcover the Evil Practices of Clandeſtine Traders, when the Parties ſo doing, ſhall be Brow-beat and Diſcountenanc'd for the ſame by the Publick Officers of the Kingdom. I once my ſelf Diſcover'd a Clandeſtine-Trade very Pernicious to the Manufactures of this Kingdom, and upon it made a very conſiderable Seizure of the Prohibited Goods; but how I was Treated by the Commiſſioners of the Cuſtoms, ſome of [illegible] now in the ſame Station can give an Acco[unt] of it; if it be poſſible for 'em ſo to do wit[h] Bluſhing. But theſe are Common Things, having been the General Practice of Comm[iſ]ſioners; we'll defer our farther Thoughts [on] this Subject, till our next Meeting.——Prith[ee] What do the People ſay at *London*, in relati[on] to all this brave News we have receiv'd of la[te]

Country-m. The Honeſt People at *Lond[on]* Rejoyce exceedingly at it. But the *Jacks* a[nd] *Tantivy*'s hereupon, Inſult the Memory of Ki[ng] *William*. They ſay the Deſign upon *Cadiz*, w[as] His Project, and it Miſcarry'd, as did eve[ry] thing elſe which He Contrived, but the De[ſig]n upon *Vigo* took Effect, becauſe it was none of H[is]

Obſ. This is juſt like them: But it is true, [as] a Demonſtration, that King *William*'s Deſign u[pon] on *Cadiz* was the Occaſion of Queen *Ann*'s D[e]ſtroying the Ships at *Vigo*, for had not o[ur] Grand Fleet and Land Forces gone to *Cadiz* they could not in their way home fro[m] that Place, have deſtroyed the Ships at *Vigo*. And the Diſappointment at *Cadiz* can ne[ver], but with the greateſt Malice and Impu[dence], be attributed to the Projector of th[e] Deſign: I don't care to Reflect too far on th[e] Miſcarriages of Men, who have been made Gre[at] by Governments for Vertues unknown to th[e] Common People: But this I'll be bold to ſa[y] as little as I know of Sea Management, th[e] Land Forces might have been Landed at *Cadiz* in ſuch a place; their Landing might have be[en] ſo well tim'd, and the Attack upon *Cadiz* migh[t] have been ſo ſpeedy, as that Town might ſoo[n] have been in the Hands of the Confederates. The Duke of *Ormond* could not work without proper Tools, nor then neither, if the[y] were thrown over-board and loſt, or at leaſ[t] made Ruſty by the Water.

But why King *William* ſhould be the Subject of every Villains Reflection with Impunity, is a meer Riddle, eſpecially under a Government, which owes its very Life and Being to the Matchleſs Courage and Conduct of this Illuſtrious Heroe. Did He not Deliver us from *Popery* and *Slavery*, at his firſt Coming? And at his Death (ſo much Lamented by all Good Men) did He not leave us in the entire Poſſeſſion of our *Laws* and *Liberties*, and the Crown ſecur'd in the Proteſtant Line for future Ages? Did He not Unite us to the *Dutch* in Bonds of Friendſhip and Intereſt, little Inferiour to that of a *National-Union*, and brought the Earl of *Marlborough* into the Field as His Succeſſor, by the Conſent of the Confederates; ſo that the tye of Friendſhip with Foreign Powers, remains firm after his Death? But if Calumnies be the reward of ſuch Eminent Services, we muſt ſay Ungrateful *England*.

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